



Out of State Tax Notices May Signal Identity Theft

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MADISON – The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) has recently received reports of what appears to be a new trend in identity theft: consumers are receiving notices from tax agencies in other states about filed tax returns.

The consumers didn't earn income or file tax returns in those states, but the state tax agency letters say their return is under review.

"Don't assume the letter is just a clerical error. If a tax return was filed using your personal information, you may be the victim of identity theft," said Sandy Chalmers, Division Administrator for Trade and Consumer Protection. "Take immediate steps to protect your identity."

Identity thieves use personal information to file fraudulent tax returns in hopes of getting a refund. If you believe you may be the victim of identity theft, DATCP recommends these immediate first steps:

- Contact one of the three major credit reporting bureaus to place a fraud alert
- Order your credit reports and review them for unexpected activities
- File a police report about the incident
- Review this DATCP fact sheet on identity theft:

<http://datep.wi.gov/uploads/Consumer/pdf/IdentityTheftWhatToDo602.pdf>

DATCP is working with the Internal Revenue Service, the Wisconsin Department of Revenue and the states that sent the notifications. If you receive a similar letter in the mail, please file a complaint on the DATCP website (<http://datep.wi.gov>) or contact the Bureau of Consumer Protection at 800-422-7128 or by email at dateph hotline@wisconsin.gov.

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